

BIOGRAPHY: Senior Airman Benjamin Fileti Outstanding Airman of the Year FY 2009 Delaware Air National Guard

Senior Airman Benjamin Fileti is a resident of Hockessin, Delaware. He attended Salesianum H.S., Wilmington, Del., from 2001-2004, and graduated from St. Mark's H.S., Wilmington, Del., in 2005

Airman Fileti is an Aircraft Structural Maintenance Journeyman (fabrication section sheet metal mechanic) in the 166th Maintenance Squadron, part of the 166th Airlift Wing, Delaware Air National Guard, located in New Castle, Del. He is a traditional, part-time member of the unit.

He deployed for the unit's Air Force Operational Readiness Exercise and 2009 Operational Readiness Inspection, and was a key contributor during the deployment as a post-attack reconnaissance team member. He volunteered for and deployed for two rotations with his unit to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan from Nov. 2009 to Jan. 2010 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. In 2008 he participated in the presidential support mission called Banner Express at New Castle Airport, Del.

He completed the time compliance technical order for aircraft main landing gear tie downs in an outstanding manner, and provided valuable assistance to complete an unscheduled maintenance on the ISO (isochronal) dock aircraft in a professional manner with careful attention to safety details of flight items.

Airman Fileti works as a full-time, active member of the Delaware National Guard Counter Drug Task Force, interacting with numerous community leaders and law enforcement officials.

While in Air Force technical school, he was selected as a "red rope" Airman leader over all other Airmen in the school held in Pensacola, Fl. He then completed his Air Force Career Development Course 5-level examinations in short-order with good grades and is currently enrolled in the Air Force Airman Leadership School course and is well ahead of schedule for promotion.

He participated as a volunteer in several community programs: DEFY (Drug Education for Youth) camp for kids; Habitat for Humanity; Thanksgiving Food Drive; Stockings for Soldiers; weekly involvement with the Stay on Track Program at area schools; transporting supplies at the VA Hospital in Wilmington. He provided practical help to dozens of award recipients in a worthy cause when he helped drill and tap trophies for the Special Olympics Delaware Plane Pull fund-raising competition in 2009.

Airman Fileti assists Delaware ANG recruiting by constantly looking for qualified candidates and promoting the benefits of membership in the National Guard as a true ambassador of the Delaware ANG.

He was a key member of the Delaware ANG F-86 aircraft assembly team that helped repair and restore a historic unit aircraft from the Korean War era. Hundreds of parts had to be inspected, cleaned and sorted when the disassembled aircraft returned from Georgetown, Del. This was tedious work that required extreme patience and a clear vision of the mission. The aircraft now stands proudly at the base main gate due to his and fellow unit members' hard work and dedication.

He was selected to represent the Delaware ANG at the Jan. 2010 State of the State address given by Delaware Governor Jack Markell in Legislative Hall, Dover, Del., and, along with a fellow member of the Delaware Army National Guard, was mentioned by name in the governor's remarks.